

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 960

By Harwell

A RESOLUTION to recognize Serve and Protect upon its fifth anniversary.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly are pleased to recognize those corporations and organizations that are dedicated to helping those in need; and

WHEREAS, Serve and Protect is one such organization, which, for the past five years, has remained unwavering in its commitment to helping criminal justice and emergency services personnel and their families through facilitating trauma services; and

WHEREAS, on July 1, 2016, Serve and Protect, a nonprofit corporation based in Brentwood, will celebrate the fifth anniversary of its founding. Founded in 2011 by Robert Michaels, a former military policeman and Norfolk Police detective, Serve and Protect is the only independent resource that provides a comprehensive scope of trauma service facilitation designed to serve the individual needs of professionals and families in crisis; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Michaels founded Serve and Protect to help law enforcement professionals, firefighters, first responders, and emergency services professionals who may experience trauma on the job, resulting in a higher rate of PTSD, suicide, addictions, divorce, domestic violence, and mental health issues; and

WHEREAS, the numbers are both sad and staggering: 85 percent of first responders and 35 percent of dispatchers experience the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder; 40 percent of first responders are involved in domestic violence; 75 percent of police officers and 87 percent of firefighters experience divorce; and a law enforcement officer commits suicide every seventeen hours; and

WHEREAS, Serve and Protect offers a wide array of services to help these individuals, including a national crisis line staffed by active and retired first responders who understand the

needs of callers and offer confidential, immediate help through Serve and Protect's four core options: residential care, which works hand-in-hand with partner Safe Call Now to ensure the greatest level of beneficial care; chaplain alliance, a network of 5,000 chaplains on call throughout the country; mental health alliance, a network of trauma therapists and counselors dedicated to the resolution of emotional wounds; and case management, which ensures the rehabilitation and restoration of the individuals and their families; and

WHEREAS, Serve and Protect has a number of strategic alliances with organizations throughout the country that strengthen and improve its level of service to those in need. The organization's cooperative efforts with Safe Call Now, the International Conference of Police Chaplains, the Federation of Fire Chaplains, Tennessee Fraternal Order of Police, the Firefighter Behavioral Health Alliance, and the National Police Suicide Foundation provide a broad-based, seasoned team that provides confidential, compassionate, and comprehensive help; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his work with Serve and Protect, Robert Michaels also serves as the State Chaplain for the Tennessee Fraternal Order of Police, on-call Chaplain for area police and fire departments, and the FBI Chaplain for the Memphis Division, Nashville R.A.; and

WHEREAS, on September 9, 2015, Mr. Michaels served as Guest Chaplain for the United States House of Representatives, an honor for which Congresswoman Marsha Blackburn nominated him; and

WHEREAS, the individuals of Serve and Protect have served with vigilance, helping thousands to cope with the incredible pressures and anxiety that come with serving in the criminal justice system and emergency services, and it is wholly fitting that we recognize this sterling organization on this occasion; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we commend and congratulate founder Robert Michaels and the dedicated individuals of Serve and Protect on their celebration of the corporation's fifth anniversary, extending our unbridled appreciation for their unwavering dedication to serving those in need.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.